

TEXAS HIGHWAY PATROL DIVISION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas Highway Patrol (THP) Division personnel are actively involved in all aspects of law enforcement throughout Texas. The division utilizes its personnel to suppress crime, interdict criminals, provide police traffic supervision, and public education in an effort to provide safe highways and public safety for Texas citizens and visitors. The division has deployed new technology and adjusted patrol techniques to ensure the security of those who travel Texas' highways. Texas Highway Patrol troopers are now equipped with the latest in-car computers, GPS tracking, digital radios, and digital DVD video recording systems. Division troopers are highly trained in all aspects of their jobs and are recognized nationally as being the "best of the best" in highway interdiction.

The division participates in special operations to secure our state's border with Mexico. Operations such as "Operation Border Star" have made significant impact to crime; human smuggling; and the movement of drugs, currency, and stolen vehicles along the Texas/Mexico border.

Commercial vehicle traffic continues to increase in Texas, and with the partial opening of the Texas/Mexico border to long haul Mexican commercial vehicle traffic the regulation of commercial traffic is increasingly important. In order to meet the growing public safety and security demands that stem from the ever-increasing number of commercial motor vehicles that are operating in Texas, additional highway patrol troopers will be trained and certified to conduct Level II and III safety inspections of commercial vehicles in order to augment the efforts of the CVE Service.

The Vehicle Inspection Service supervises the inspection program that requires motorists to have their vehicles inspected and in some counties emissions tested annually for conditions and defects in an effort to prevent traffic crashes and eliminate other health and safety risks. THP remains committed to the maintenance of a valid and viable vehicle safety inspection program. The division is currently evaluating the concept of centralizing and combining all functions of the vehicle safety inspection program. This concept would place all field operations and headquarter record keeping functions under a single chain of command located at the Austin headquarters.

The Communications Service operates a statewide communications network which includes a total of 32 full-service communications facilities that are operated 24 hours a day. To achieve statewide seamless radio interoperability among all public safety entities throughout the state, THP will continue to work with other agencies to develop and implement a statewide trunked radio system, utilizing 700 MHz where feasible. As communications technology continues to

advance, THP will work to combine resources and equipment to maximize areas of communications throughout the state.

The THP division will continue its employee recruitment efforts and will enhance employee job skills through all available training programs.

The Texas Highway Patrol Division, formerly known as the Traffic Law Enforcement Division (TLE), was established within the Department in 1968 in an effort to streamline the command structure of those units and services whose primary responsibility related to enforcing the traffic laws of the State. The TLE Division was reorganized and renamed in September 2003. The reorganization included the combining and renaming of services and the addition of a new highway patrol district and two new regions. Highway Patrol, Safety Education, Vehicle Inspection, and Capitol Services were combined and renamed the Highway Patrol Service, and the License and Weight Service was renamed Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Service. The THP Division is divided into eight (8) regional commands, which comprise its field operations. Regional headquarters offices are located in Garland, Houston, Corpus Christi, Midland, Lubbock, Waco, Austin, and McAllen. The authorized strength of the THP Division consists of 4,007 members; 2,706 commissioned officers, and 1,301 civilian support personnel. These totals include the addition of sixty-one (61) positions in the Highway Patrol Service authorized by the 80th Legislative Session in 2007. These additional positions were allocated along the Texas/Mexico border to provide an enhanced presence of law enforcement personnel to deter and prevent criminal activity. The division is uniquely responsible for a variety of enforcement activities and regulatory functions. These responsibilities involve traffic, vehicles, drivers, and other individuals. The enforcement, regulatory, staff, and support services of the division are separate units with programs and objectives that are designed to complement one another in order to accomplish the overall objective of the Department. The THP Division provides protection and security for the Governor and has responsibility for all police services within the Capitol Complex. The men and women of the THP Division carry out the activities of the division through four (4) field services, which are specialized by function.

Texas Highway Patrol Accomplishments

THP personnel have made significant accomplishments during the last several years, especially in the areas of traffic safety and highway criminal interdiction efforts. Criminal law enforcement activities conducted as the result of traffic stops during 2007 totaled 12,663 felony, and 41,225 misdemeanor arrests. In addition, THP troopers routinely continue to lead the nation in the seizure of various types of controlled substances. During 2007, they made 1,593 drug interdiction arrests in which 93,445 pounds of marijuana, 3,204 pounds of cocaine, 147 pounds of methamphetamine,

and smaller amounts of other narcotics were seized. THP troopers seized 12.4 million dollars in U.S. currency. The division also continues to operate and maintain programs related to regulation of commercial motor vehicle traffic, increased public education and awareness, and the operation of a statewide communications network designed to serve the needs of all criminal justice agencies in Texas. Additionally, THP personnel supervise the operation of the statewide breath test program, air quality monitoring and emissions enforcement, and maintaining files and records related to State enforcement of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Act. THP has replaced all of the older analog communications equipment with modern narrow-band digital radios.

All Americans are affected by the smuggling of drugs, humans, terrorists, and other types of contraband as it makes its way across the Texas/Mexico border and into our communities. Division troopers are playing an important role in creating a stronger presence along the border to prevent and deter criminal activity. Troopers from across the state comprise numerous strike teams deployed to the border regions to supplement local and federal law enforcement officers participating in "Operation Border Star." The primary strategy employed for Operation Border Star is to provide high visibility presence on all roadways leading from the border to the interior of Texas. This high visibility presence provides a tremendous deterrent while placing troopers in strategic locations to interdict drug and human smugglers, auto thieves, and generally reduce crime along the border.

Troopers have participated in "Operation Border Star" since September, 2007. During this time troopers have made 104 significant drug/currency interdiction cases resulting in the seizure of 11,415 pounds of marijuana, 278,422 grams of cocaine, 594 grams of heroin, 655 grams of methamphetamine, and \$1,546,956 in U.S. currency. Troopers also made 2,076 criminal apprehensions, and recovered 249 stolen vehicles. Additionally, troopers have issued 103,656 traffic citations, 533,916 warnings for minor traffic violations, and have made 2,206 DWI arrests.

Texas Highway Patrol Division Plans

THP Division personnel are actively involved in all aspects of law enforcement to provide a safe environment for citizens and visitors of the State. In order to provide an adequate and effective level of service, additional resources, both personnel and equipment will be necessary. Troopers from across the State are being deployed to the border area to augment law enforcement personnel involved in "Operation Border Star." The remaining troopers are required to work overtime to "fill in" gaps left as a result of these deployments to the border.

The THP Division is well aware of the value of recruitment, retention, and career advancement opportunities for our employees. The division continually seeks ways to enhance employee skills through training programs such as criminal interdiction training, first line supervisor's training, mid-level supervisors' and senior management programs through the Governor's Center for Management Development. Additional training is also provided by the Texas Police Association, Northwestern University Center for Public Safety, Southern Police Institute, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy. We also encourage mentorship programs to encourage division personnel to advance within the agency.

The THP Division plans to increase the use of new technology and innovative patrol techniques to ensure the security of citizens as they travel Texas highways. High visibility deployments of personnel, increased task force operations, and the development and application of new technologies will allow the more efficient removal of problem drivers and criminals from the highways. THP remains committed to the maintenance of a valid and viable vehicle safety inspection program. The division is evaluating the concept of centralizing and combining all functions of the vehicle safety inspection program. This concept would place all field operations and headquarters record keeping functions under a single chain of command located at the Austin headquarters. THP is currently working to network all Communications Facilities. THP is implementing an IP-based radio gateway solution that will allow the Department to interoperate with other first responder and law enforcement entities across the State to achieve statewide interoperability. THP will continue to provide training in the enforcement of commercial motor vehicle laws to DPS troopers, as well as officers from other agencies. Service-specific initiatives are listed below.

Highway Patrol Service

The Highway Patrol Service is charged with the responsibility of enforcing traffic and criminal laws, investigation of motor vehicle traffic crashes, and providing a visible police presence in order to deter violators along more than 223,000 miles of rural highways across the State. In addition, Highway Patrol troopers have a responsibility to respond to natural emergencies, civil disorder, and other situations when requested by local authorities. The Highway Patrol Service currently has an authorized strength of 2,180 officers, including supervisors, and is spread across 18 highway patrol districts statewide.

The programs of the Highway Patrol Service are police traffic supervision, general police work, public safety education, and Capitol security. Police traffic supervision consists of police traffic direction, police traffic crash investigation, and police traffic law enforcement and patrol, counterfeit document enforcement,

ensuring integrity of government documents related to the Department's vehicle inspection program, and conducting regulatory duties in support of the vehicle inspection program. Highway patrol troopers involved in the counterfeit document enforcement regularly communicate with the Driver License Fraud Investigative Unit, and services of the Criminal Law Enforcement Division, and Texas Ranger Division. These communications result in a coordinated effort to combat fraudulent document violations.

General police work consists of criminal law enforcement, emergency and disaster assistance, security activities, concealed handgun license investigations, counter-terrorism, and homeland security activities.

Public safety education consists of public traffic safety education, public education in crime prevention and emergency management matters, providing public information, cooperation with and assistance to other agencies, and providing intra-departmental staff assistance. Information is provided to the public on various topics including child safety seat use, occupant protection, bicycle/pedestrian safety, DWI/drug awareness, crime prevention, and overall traffic safety. This information is disseminated to the general public through the news media, schools, civic clubs, MADD chapters, various other concerned citizen groups, and other law enforcement agencies. The Highway Patrol Service is also responsible for public information activities and the coordination of regional recruiting efforts for trooper positions. Highway patrol troopers assigned as regional recruiters participate in recruiting efforts at local educational institutions, military bases, and job fairs. These troopers are responsible for the regional testing and interview process of trooper applicants. They also coordinate with the Austin recruiting office to ensure that pre-established recruiting timelines and deadlines are met, and that regional recruiting files are submitted to the Austin recruiting office.

Capitol security consists of police functions, security, and parking administration in the Capitol Complex, which encompasses a 46-square block area in Austin and includes the State Capitol Building, Governor's Mansion, 29 State office buildings, and 13 private office buildings. There are approximately 40,000 persons who conduct business at the Capitol Complex during any given weekday, along with the more than 14,000 State employees who work within that area. The Highway Patrol Service is charged with protecting State property and buildings, and providing a safe environment for State officials, employees, and the general public. Entrance to and public use of State-owned buildings and parking in the statutorily created Capitol Complex is regulated by the Highway Patrol Service. The Highway Patrol Service provides total police service in the Capitol Complex including traffic enforcement, parking enforcement, and criminal investigations. In addition to the law enforcement effort within the Capitol District, THP provides locksmith services for all State agencies, 24-hour police communications, first response to all fire and security alarms, and parking assignment administration. The Highway Patrol Service has three (3) canine

handlers assigned to the Capitol Complex. Currently two (2) explosive canines and one (1) canine capable of detecting biological and chemical agents are assigned to the Capitol Complex.

Accomplishments

Enforcement efforts by highway patrol troopers continue to play a significant role in the reduction, over the past several years, of the rural traffic crash death rate (deaths per 100 million miles driven). The number of drug interdictions and the apprehension of wanted fugitives and others engaged in criminal activities stopped for traffic violations, continues to increase as troopers become more involved in the Department's emphasis on "going beyond the traffic stop." Such favorable results have been enhanced by the utilization of task force operations and line patrol. With the THP Automated Information System becoming operational, service commanders are better able to track crash and other traffic problem trends and therefore better able to effectively deploy their personnel. Access to computer technology has been extended to every sergeant area command.

All highway patrol vehicles are now equipped with video and audio recording systems, as well as stinger spike tire deflation systems. These relatively new technologies enhance the overall effectiveness of the troopers. The video and audio recording systems are critical in providing irrefutable evidence in both traffic and criminal cases. Tire deflation systems allow a safer and more successful way to deter and terminate high-speed pursuits.

The DPS Dive-Recovery Team, comprised primarily of highway patrol personnel, has answered an increasing number of calls for service to assist local agencies and other DPS services during the past few years. Requests for assistance have covered a variety of incidences, ranging from underwater evidentiary searches to searches for drowning victims.

THP has developed a Mobile Major Incident Media Response Unit. The unit is composed of equipment necessary to go any place in the State to any kind of major event or disaster and set up facilities to provide information to the media in a temporary, but professional setting. Equipment consists of a portable stage, tent, sound system, podium, and seating for media personnel. The equipment is set up immediately at the scene of the event and is utilized by Department personnel, local, state, or national officials who have a need to meet with the media and provide information in a professional setting. The unit was first used at the Del Rio floods in 1998.

Also all highway patrol officers with a safety education function are trained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as child safety seat technicians. These officers learned how to properly install and inspect child safety seats in automobiles. Officers frequently take part in child safety seat clinics where inspections and installations are done free of charge for any citizen that wants to have their child safety seats inspected by a certified expert. Frequently child safety seats are found to be damaged, or on a manufacturer's recall list, and are replaced free of charge. Generally, these child safety seats are provided by grants from various organizations.

During 2007, highway patrol troopers with a vehicle inspection function recovered 3,213 counterfeit documents (inspection certificates, registration documents, driver licenses, insurance documents, and other counterfeit documents). They also made over 149 felony arrests, and 48 misdemeanor arrests associated with counterfeit documents, and tampering with government records.

Plans

In addition to continuing to strive toward increasing the effectiveness of all Highway Patrol Service programs and strategies directed at making a safer highway system, THP will continue to improve the troopers' ability to do their jobs through equipment procurement and training.

Troopers continue to receive training in the "going beyond the traffic stop" program in order to increase the troopers' ability to detect and apprehend drug couriers and other criminal offenders using the highway system. Training is also included in counter terrorism training. Additional training and certification for highway patrol troopers in the area of commercial motor vehicle safety inspections will be continued in order to aid in obtaining compliance with laws and regulations controlling heavy commercial vehicles.

Plans are also in progress to update and equip additional advanced crash reconstruction teams in key locations throughout the 18 highway patrol districts.

A project is currently underway to deploy laptop computers in highway patrol vehicles statewide to provide direct roadside messaging and communications to the trooper on patrol. This technology provides real time access to various law enforcement related databases by the trooper in the vehicle and incorporate global positioning system (GPS) data and mapping software between the patrol unit and the Department's 32 Communications facilities to provide alerts and locations of units in need of emergency assistance and to assist in locating remote incidents. It

would also provide real time update of data stored in the THP Automated Information System, which would allow more timely information for decision makers to plan enforcement strategies and future needs.

As an increase in population continues to evolve and grow so will the vehicular traffic, both regular and commercial. With this increase in traffic, the necessity to improve the transportation infrastructure in Texas is inevitable. The proposed Trans-Texas Corridor will be a system of new infrastructure facilities located parallel or adjacent to many of our existing highway systems. One of these new systems is the Central Texas Turnpike Authority (CTTA). Additional highway patrol personnel have been assigned to provide police services for CTTA.

Although the future availability of federal grants is unknown, THP will continue planning for ways to access and utilize available funding in order to enhance the ability to conduct special emphasis and selective traffic enforcement programs where needed. THP will also remain committed to keeping commissioned positions filled.

THP plans to continue and even expand the safety education programs in which it is currently involved. Many elementary school programs are carried out with the use of robots that are manned by highway patrol officers and deliver safety messages to schoolchildren. These programs are well received. The Department has at least one robot in each region.

THP plans to take advantage of future federal grants to provide necessary funding in order to be able to provide safety programs throughout the State. The grants would provide funding for payment of overtime for officers and travel expense to enable officers to conduct more of the clinics over a broader area of the State. The Highway Patrol Service plans to handle calls for service related to public traffic safety education, as resources will permit. Officers will man and utilize the Major Media Response Unit, as dictated by events that occur.

THP will continue to be an integral partner with other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in securing the State's border with Mexico by being involved in "Operation Border Star."

Security was enhanced in 2002 by the addition of two bomb-sniffing canines at the Capitol. As funds become available, additional electronic security equipment will be obtained and/or upgrades implemented.

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement

The Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) Service has grown substantially from eighteen (18) original highway department inspectors to its present strength

of 485 commissioned and 263 noncommissioned commercial motor vehicle inspectors and will continue to grow with the opening of the Texas/Mexico border as a requirement of the North American Free Trade Agreement. CVE is charged with reducing commercial motor vehicle crashes through the enforcement of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and protecting the State highways from unnecessary damage by securing compliance with the statutory provisions of law regulating weight of commercial vehicles. This service also ensures equitable payment of commercial vehicle registration fees by enforcement of registration laws. It strives to protect the rights, privileges, and safety of the general public in the use of the highway system by securing compliance with all traffic laws and regulations applicable to the operation of all vehicles.

Accomplishments

The CVE Service has, in the past year, implemented the new and innovative civilian commercial vehicle inspection and compliance review programs. The service has, and continues to work closely with TxDOT to design, construct, equip, and staff Border Safety Inspection Facilities for commercial vehicles utilizing the Texas/Mexico border ports of entry. The service has trained municipal police officers who work motor carrier enforcement within their local jurisdictions. The CVE Service has also trained a number of highway patrol personnel to conduct Level II and III inspections on commercial vehicles to increase the number of commercial vehicle safety inspections in Texas.

As the CVE job becomes increasingly technical, new technology must be employed to assist troopers in their daily duties. The CVE Service has pioneered the use of laptop computers within the Department and there is now one in every CVE enforcement vehicle. Software development has made the troopers' job more effective and efficient, as they can now generate and download numerous reports from the laptop to their supervisors. Since the CVE job requires more equipment today than ever before, the need for a more versatile type of vehicle has become apparent. Therefore, Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) are now being issued to CVE troopers throughout the State. The SUV has proven to be an excellent replacement to the traditional police sedan for CVE purposes.

Plans

With the partial opening of the Texas/Mexico border to long haul Mexican commercial vehicle traffic, the responsibility to staff eight (8) commercial vehicle border safety inspection stations will fall upon the CVE Service. The Department has implemented a three-phase plan to appropriately staff these border crossings. The CVE Service will continue the implementation of the new civilian commercial vehicle inspection and compliance review programs to allow commissioned personnel to conduct

more roadside stops and inspections away from fixed-site locations. Plans are in place to provide additional training to municipal police officers working in commercial motor carrier enforcement. Additional highway patrol troopers will be trained and certified to conduct Level II and III safety inspections of commercial vehicles in order to augment the efforts of the CVE Service. As funds permit, CVE will increase its use of advanced technology to detect criminals, weigh commercial vehicles, and ensure the security of citizens as they travel Texas highways. CVE will continue to seek voluntary compliance by carriers and drivers through its efforts to maintain positive liaison contacts within the transportation industry.

The CVE Service will also continue to seek federal grant funding to enhance the ability to enforce Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations while reducing the fiscal burden on State coffers. The ability to access and utilize this federal funding will allow the CVE Service to greatly reduce the number of commercial vehicles operating in Texas with serious safety-related violations.

Vehicle Inspection Service

The Vehicle Inspection Service supervises all vehicle inspection stations throughout Texas. The inspection program requires motorists to have their vehicles inspected annually for conditions and defects in an effort to prevent traffic crashes and eliminate other health and safety risks. These inspections are conducted at more than 10,000 privately owned and operated garages certified by the Department. More than 32,300 inspectors, trained and certified by the Department, perform approximately 16.8 million vehicle inspections annually. The Vehicle Inspection Service trains and examines prospective inspectors, conducts routine quality control checks, investigates citizens' complaints, and takes administrative enforcement action against certified inspection stations and inspectors found to be in noncompliance with program requirements.

Vehicle inspection troopers are assigned the primary responsibilities of counterfeit document enforcement, ensuring integrity of government documents related to the program, and conducting regulatory duties in support of the vehicle inspection program. The troopers also conduct traffic patrol directed toward compliance with vehicle inspection, driver license, registration, insurance, and other laws and regulations.

Accomplishments

During 2007, more than 16.115 million inspection certificates were issued to vehicles operating on Texas highways. As a result of inspection station supervision and enforcement by Vehicle Inspection Service employees,

including commissioned troopers and noncommissioned vehicle inspection technicians, over 94% of the vehicles requiring inspection complied with the State's inspection program. Inspection certificate sales and inspection stations are increasing annually at a rate of 2% to 3%.

Through effective management techniques, the service has been able to keep pace with this growth without personnel increases. During 2007, vehicle inspection troopers recovered 3,213 counterfeit documents (inspection certificates, registration documents, driver licenses, insurance documents, and other counterfeit documents). They also made over 149 felony arrests, and 48 misdemeanor arrests associated with counterfeit documents, and tampering with government records.

Plans

The Vehicle Inspection Service has been significantly involved in the emissions testing program. Vehicle emissions testing is currently conducted in 17 Texas counties. These requirements continue the need for enhancements in staff training and technological support. The growth in Texas and associated relationship to the annual growth in the number of vehicles requiring inspection and the number of certified inspectors and inspection stations require the service to consistently reevaluate processes in order to adequately provide services for the inspection program. A key component in this process was the replacement of manual paper-based process in non-emissions testing areas with an automated system to collect vehicle and safety inspection data, manage licensing of stations and inspectors, and manage inventory and sales of inspection certificates. Deployment of the Texas Automated Vehicle Inspection System (TAVIS) began in the summer of 2007 and was fully operational statewide on August 1, 2007.

The division is evaluating the concept of centralizing and combining all functions of the vehicle safety inspection program. This concept would place all field operations and headquarters record keeping functions under a single chain of command located at the Austin headquarters.

Communications Service

The Communications Service operates a statewide communications network designed to serve the communications needs of all criminal justice agencies in Texas. The system utilizes satellite, radio, telephone, and landline telecommunications systems and includes a total of thirty-two (32) full-service communications facilities that are operated 24 hours a day. The Communications Service carries out its duties through four (4) programs:

- Communications between Department units;

- Communications between the Department and other law enforcement agencies;
- Information and assistance to the public in emergency and other Department-related matters, and
- Warnings and communications necessary for the protection of lives and property of the public.

The Communications Service consists of 267 noncommissioned personnel.

Accomplishments

The Communications Service has been required to become more efficient in their duties due to increased calls for service as a result of more population and traffic-related problems. The in-car computer system that is currently being deployed statewide has been integrated into the Communications Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system to allow Communications personnel to monitor hits on wanted/stolen information. It incorporates global positioning system (GPS) data and mapping software between the patrol units and the Communications Facilities to provide alerts and locations of units in need of emergency assistance. All communications personnel have been successfully trained on the new operation of the new system.

Six (6) of the Communications Facilities have been upgraded with new ergonomic furniture and state of the art electronics equipment to display automated vehicle locator (AVL) mapping of units and incidents across the State as well as current catastrophic disaster and homeland security information.

Plans

Communications personnel will continue to become more knowledgeable in the operation of the in-car system in order to maximize its efficiency and safety features. The service will provide additional customer service training to personnel who are frequently the first point of contact for citizens in need of emergency service.

To achieve statewide seamless radio interoperability among all public safety entities throughout the State, THP will continue to work with other agencies to develop and implement a statewide trunked radio system, utilizing 700 MHz where feasible. As communications technology continues to advance, THP will work to combine resources and equipment to maximize areas of communications throughout the State.

THP will seek funding to update the antiquated equipment and furniture in the remaining 26 Communications Facilities across the State. This

funding will provide ergonomic furniture and state of the art electronics equipment to display automated vehicle locator (AVL) mapping of units and incidents across the State as well as current catastrophic disaster and homeland security information. This will provide an immediate view, status, and location of units in need of emergency assistance.

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